

General Information for Importing Pets into Japan from the United States (not including Hawaii or Guam)

Pets (dogs and cats) may be imported into Japan with a quarantine of less than 12 hours if the following conditions are met:

1. The importer must provide advance notification of the animal to be imported to the Animal Quarantine Service with jurisdiction over the intended air or seaport of arrival at least 40 days prior to arrival in Japan by fax or mail. For dogs, this should be a “NOTIFICATION OF IMPORT INSPECTION OF DOG”, and for cats, this should be a “NOTIFICATION OF IMPORT OF ANIMALS UNDER THE RABIES PREVENTION LAW.”
2. **Individual identification by microchip:** Dogs and cats must be individually identified by an ISO compliant microchip. If the animal is not fitted with an ISO compliant (11784 and 11785) microchip, the importer must bring a microchip reader with the pet.
3. **Microchip Implantation:** The pet must be microchipped on the day of or before the 1st vaccination.

EXCEPTION: Microchip implantation can occur on the day of or before the 2nd vaccination when the export health certificate, endorsed by APHIS, shows that:

- a) the 1st vaccination was administered prior to microchip implantation, and
- b) the animal had a rabies antibody titer of at least 0.5 IU/ml on a serum sample collected on the day of administration of the 2nd vaccination.

4. **Rabies vaccination:** Dogs and cats 91 days of age and older must be vaccinated at least twice with an approved rabies vaccine. The 1st vaccination must have been administered according to label recommendations. The 2nd vaccination must be current according to label recommendations and have occurred more than 31 days after the 1st vaccination and within the effective period of the 1st vaccination.
5. **Measurement of rabies antibody levels:** Dogs and cats must be evaluated for serum rabies antibody level. The animal must have been vaccinated for rabies in accordance with section 4 above.

For animals that were microchipped before or on the day of the 1st vaccination, the serum sample may be collected on the date of 2nd vaccination or any day until the end of the effective period of the 2nd vaccination.

The rabies titer test must be carried out at a laboratory approved by the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan. The results of the rabies titer test must be greater than or equal to 0.5 IU/ml. The result of rabies titer test is valid for two years from the date of sampling. The laboratory results must be originals (no USDA endorsement needed) or copies with USDA endorsement. No report is needed if the animal is a returning pet that has a valid “Export Quarantine Certificate” with lab results listed within the last two years.

Approved Laboratories:

- 1) Kansas State University Rabies Laboratory
- 2) DOD Veterinary Food Analysis and Diagnostic Laboratory

6. **180 days wait:** Dogs and cats are required to undergo a wait of at least 180 days between the date the sample is collected for the rabies titer test and the date the animal arrives in Japan. If 180 days have not passed before the animal's arrival in Japan, the animal will be quarantined in AQS facility to make up the number of days remaining in the 180-day wait period. Antibody levels are measured in order to confirm whether or not the animal has developed immunity to rabies. The reason for the wait is to make sure that the animal has not contracted rabies prior to developing immunity to it as a result of immunization, 180 days corresponds to the incubation period for the disease.
7. **Health Certificate from exporting country:** Dogs and cats must be inspected by a veterinarian and confirmed free of clinical signs of infectious disease including rabies and leptospirosis (for dogs) prior to departure. The exporter needs to have an Exporter's Declaration and an Export Health Certificate.

Exporter's declaration: Form A (supplied by the Government of Japan) is recommended to be used for this purpose. The exporter needs to prepare the Exporter's Declaration with the assistance of an accredited veterinarian. This form needs to be endorsed by APHIS-VS.

Export health certificate:

- i. Form C (supplied by the Government of Japan) is recommended to be used for this purpose. The exporter will need to have this form endorsed by APHIS-VS. OR:
- ii. Another health certificate option is the VS Form 7001 which can be obtained from the issuing accredited veterinarian. This form needs to be endorsed by APHIS-VS.

Recommended treatments and measures: Japan recommends the following measures for pets that are to be imported into Japan. ****NOT REQUIRED****

1. **Immunization:** Japan recommends that the following immunizations be given to dogs and cats that are 91 days old or older 30 days prior to their arrival in Japan (within the vaccine immunization effectiveness period).
 - a. **Dogs:** distemper, contagious hepatitis (Adenovirus type II acceptable), parvovirus infectious disease trivalent vaccine (parainfluenza, leptospirosis, coronavirus)
 - b. **Cats:** feline viral rhinotracheitis, feline calicivirus, feline panleukopenia trivalent vaccine
2. **Parasite treatment:** Japan recommends the following parasite treatments before departure (no more than 4 days before boarding):
 - a. **External parasites:** Treat with medicines effective against mites and fleas, and at the time of export have a clinical inspection to confirm that the animal is free from these parasites.

- b. **Internal parasites:** administer medicine effective against nematodes and tapeworms.

Military pets:

For **retired military** personnel and their families, Japan requires APHIS endorsement of a valid health certificate. APHIS VS may endorse health certificates for pet dogs and cats for military personnel, when they meet the importing requirements of Japan on an APHIS 7001, Japan's Form C, MDJ 2209 Form or other suitable health certificate format.

Active duty military personnel and their families may use a valid health certificate issued by a military veterinarian without APHIS endorsement for pet dogs and cats.